

UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF GRAZING



LIVESTOCK GRAZING IS AN ESSENTIAL LAND MANAGEMENT TOOL

Today, more than 22,000 ranchers graze cattle and sheep on federal lands. Grazing itself provides a wide variety of benefits, and the associated investments ranchers make in federal lands bring widespread advantages for land management agencies, communities, taxpayers, and natural resources alike. As stewards of the land, ranchers are the primary protectors of the rich open spaces which all Americans enjoy.



\$150 PER ACRE
– THE COST TO
FEDERAL AGENCIES
TO REDUCE FUEL
LOADS AND FIRE
RISK.
**GRAZING DOES
THIS AT NO
COST TO THE
TAXPAYER.**

ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

Not only do cattle and sheep that graze on public lands **protect open spaces from conversion** to housing developments, warehouses, or subdivisions, they improve the health of soil, plants, and wildlife in those ecosystems. Grazing is an effective tool to manage a wide variety of forage, spurring growth of perennial grasses, and **decreasing invasive species** like cheatgrass. Grazing makes significant contributions to soil health, increasing organic matter, and **improving carbon storage**. In the conversation about climate and creating more resilient landscapes, **public lands grazing has the solutions.**

WILDFIRE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, more than **10.3 million acres** burned across the West in 2020. Due to a long history of fire suppression, the focus on creating resilient landscapes is more important than ever. Cattle and sheep producers play a critical role in reducing the buildup of grasses and other fuels that contribute to the risk of catastrophic wildfire across a broad landscape. Grazing is also a **nimble tool** that can be applied in precise places to **create fuel breaks** and apply targeted treatments to invasive species, especially when options like prescribed burns or chemical treatments may not be practical.

ECONOMIC STABILITY

Public lands ranchers are the backbone of their rural communities. Ranchers serve in a variety of volunteer positions, support local businesses, and return investments to the range. Ranchers **invest their own resources** in a variety of range improvements that benefit federal agencies, wildlife, and the environment. Additionally, ranchers **protect open spaces** for other multiple uses that generate additional revenue. The Department of the Interior estimates that at a minimum, public lands ranchers contribute **\$1.5 billion** each year to economies across the West.

There is no better steward than the one who is personally invested in the health and vitality of the landscape. Those stewards have been, and will continue to be, public lands ranchers.

UPDATED 3/21/2021